2009 Annual Alberta Labour Market Review

Employment · Unemployment · Economic Regions · Migration · Aboriginal People · Industries · Occupations · Education · Age Groups

Government of Alberta

Alberta

Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

Employment

Employment fell 25,200 in Alberta

Employment in Alberta and Canada declined in 2009 by 25,200 and 276,900 respectively. Seven out of ten provinces across Canada recorded decreases. Two provinces saw positive growth in employment: Saskatchewan had 1.5% growth, and New Brunswick had 0.1% growth. (See Figure 1)

Employment in Alberta was 1.3% lower in 2009 than in 2008. (See Figure 3) This represented the first decline in annual employment since 1993. Employment in Canada fell by 1.6% in 2009.

Female employment in Alberta rose 4,100 or 0.5%, and male employment decreased by 29,300, or 2.6%. Part-time employment was higher by 29,400, while full-time employment was lower by 54,600 in 2009. For Alberta men and women, part-time employment increased by 9.6% and 8.8% respectively; full-time employment declined by 3.8% and 2.4%.

Alberta's participation rate[1], at 74.3%, remained the highest of all provinces in 2009. The participation rate for Alberta women increased to 68.0% from 67.6% in 2008.

Figure 1

Provincial and National Employment, 2009

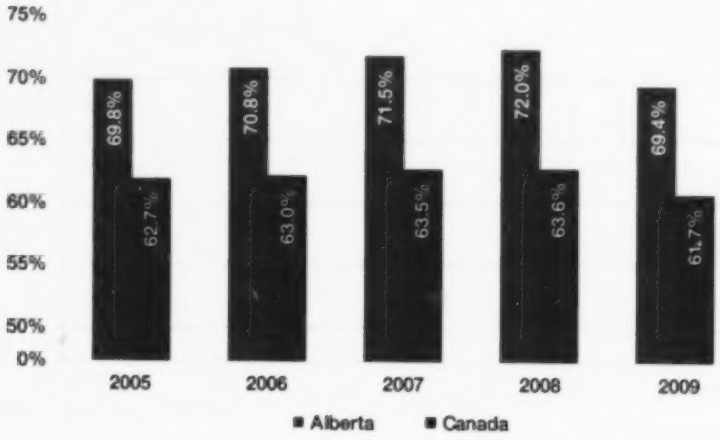
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Province	Employment	Change from 2008	Per Cent Change
Alberta	1,988,100	-25,200	-1.3%
British Columbia	2,259,400	-54,900	-2.4%
Manitoba	606,900	200	0.0%
New Brunswick	366,400	200	0.1%
Newfoundland and Labrador	214,900	-5,400	-2.5%
Nova Scotia	452,800	-400	-0.1%
Ontario	6,526,100	-161,200	-2.4%
Prince Edward Island	69,500	-700	-1.0%
Quebec	3,844,200	-37,500	-1.0%
Saskatchewan	520,600	7,900	1.5%
Canada	16,848,900	-276,900	-1.6%

Figure 2

Alberta and Canada Employment Rates*, 2005-2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



[1] *The participation rate measures the number of people employed and unemployed out of the working age population (15+ years).*

* *The employment rate measures the number of people employed out of the working age population (15+ years).*
Note: The slanted double line is used to represent a discontinuity in the employment rates to display the finer details of the differences between the data points shown in the chart.

Alberta maintains the highest employment rate in Canada

Alberta's employment rate of 69.4% was the highest in the country, a position the province has held since 1976. The national employment rate was 61.7% in 2009. (See Figure 2)

The employment rates for Alberta men and women were 74.5% and 64.1% respectively, the highest among the provinces. Nationally, the employment rate was 65.2% for men and 58.3% for women.

Alberta men 35 to 39 years of age had the highest employment rate at 90.5%. Alberta women 45 to 49 years of age had the highest employment rate at 82.2%. In 2009, the employment rate increased the most for women 60 to 69 years of age, rising by more than three percentage points.

Figure 3

Alberta Annual Average Growth in Employment, 2005-2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

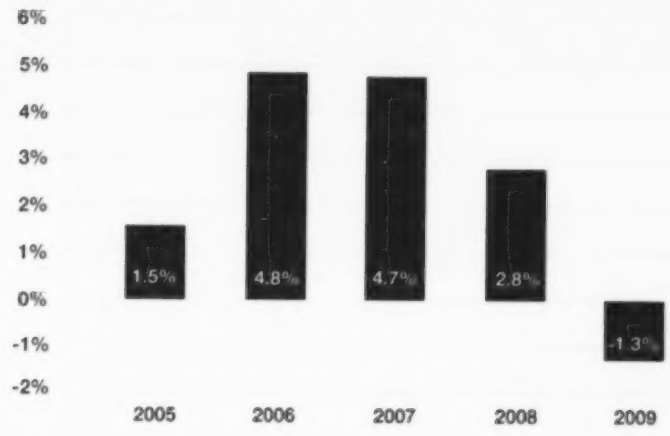
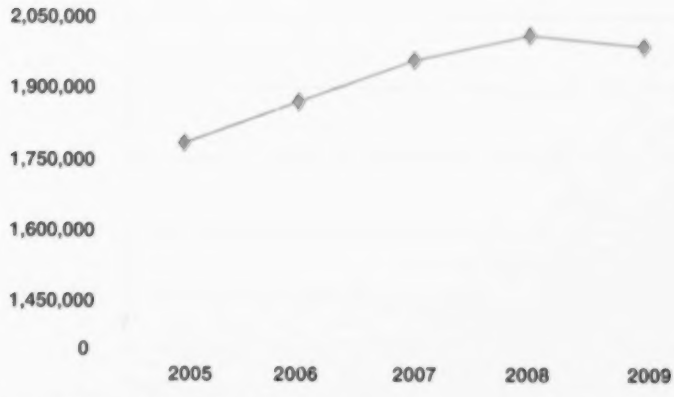


Figure 4

Alberta Annual Average Employment, 2005-2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



Note: The slanted double line is used to represent a discontinuity in the employment levels to display the finer details of the differences between the data points shown in the chart.

Unemployment

Alberta had the third lowest unemployment rate in Canada

Alberta's unemployment rate of 6.6% was the third lowest of all provinces, following Saskatchewan at 4.8% and Manitoba at 5.2%. (See Figure 5) The unemployment rates rose among all provinces in 2009, with the national unemployment rate rising from 6.1% to 8.3%. Alberta's unemployment rate has been lower than the Canadian rate since 1989; in 2009, that trend continued. (See Figure 6)

The unemployment rate for Alberta men was 7.2%, and for women, it was 5.8% in 2009.

The unemployment rate for young workers between 15 and 24 years old increased by 4.8 percentage points to 12.3%, the highest since 1994. Nevertheless, this unemployment rate was the third lowest youth unemployment rate in Canada, after Saskatchewan at 9.6% and Manitoba at 10.2%. Also, the 71.1% participation rate for young Albertans remained the highest of the age group in the country.

Figure 5
Provincial and National Unemployment Rates, 2009
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

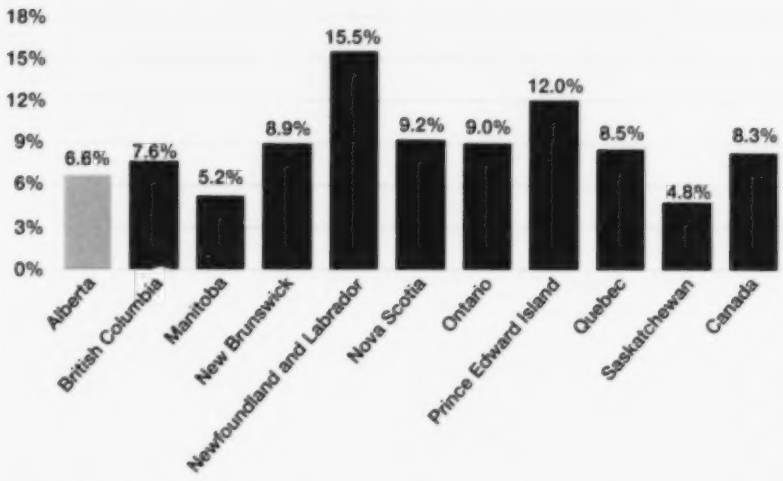
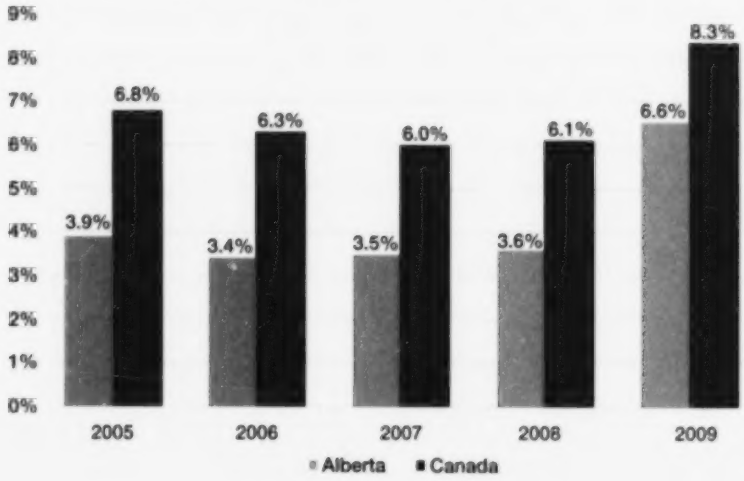


Figure 6
Alberta and Canada Unemployment Rates, 2005-2009
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



Economic Regions

Regional employment impacted by economic downturn

All of Alberta's eight economic regions experienced employment declines in 2009 except Banff-Jasper-Rocky Mountain House, where the employment level remained unchanged from the previous year.

Employment decreased in Red Deer by 800; Athabasca-Grande Prairie-Peace River by 1,300; Wood Buffalo-Cold Lake by 1,400; Lethbridge-Medicine Hat by 2,200; Camrose-Drumheller by 5,700; Edmonton by 5,900; and in Calgary by 8,000.

Unemployment rates were higher in all regions, with increases ranging between 1.5 and 3.4 percentage points. The unemployment rates for the regions in 2009 were: Wood Buffalo-Cold Lake 5.1%; Camrose-Drumheller 5.2%; Banff-Jasper-Rocky Mountain House 5.3%; Lethbridge-Medicine Hat 5.7%; Calgary 6.6%; Edmonton 6.8%; Red Deer 7.3%; and Athabasca-Grande Prairie-Peace River 7.9%. (See Figures 7 and 8)

Figure 7

Economic Regions in Northern Alberta, Unemployment Rates Between 2005-2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

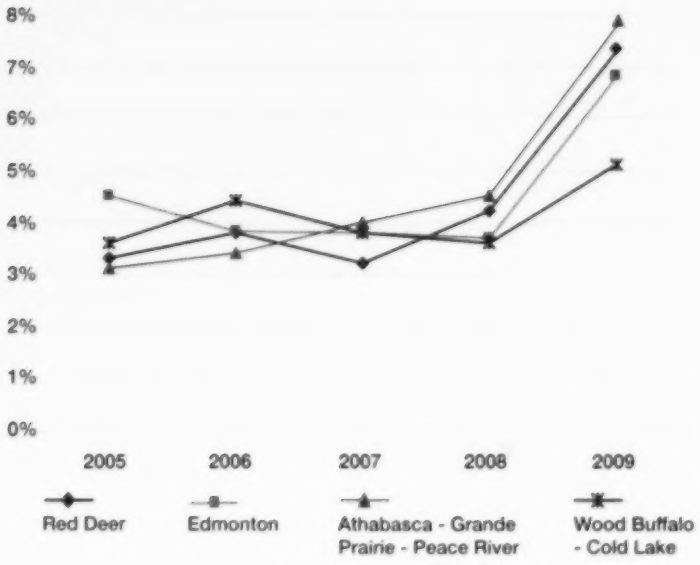
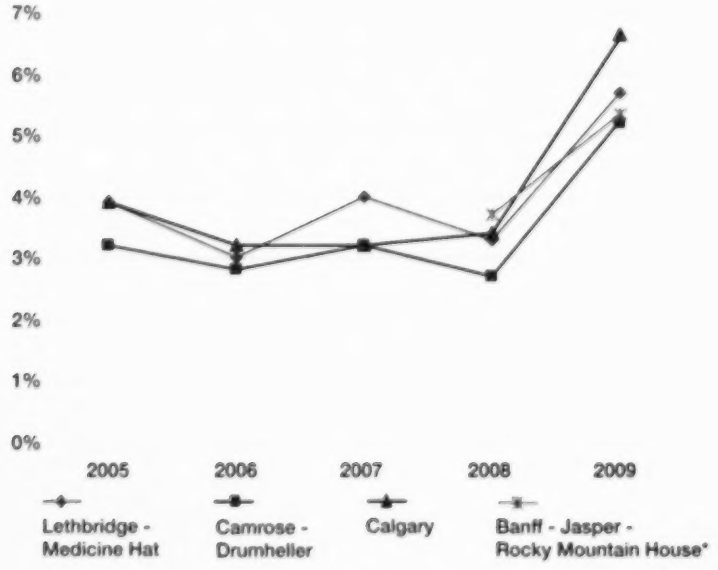


Figure 8

Economic Regions in Southern Alberta, Unemployment Rates Between 2005-2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



** The unemployment rates in 2005, 2006, and 2007 for Banff-Jasper-Rocky Mountain House were not released due to insufficient data.*

International migration continues to increase while interprovincial remains volatile

Migration

Interprovincial and international migration to Alberta resulted in a net gain of 42,626 people in 2008[2], higher than the 30,697 people in 2007.

The movement of interprovincial migrants to Alberta has been volatile between 2004 and 2008. The number of net interprovincial migrants to Alberta rose from 20,877 to 43,418 between 2004 and 2005; fell from 46,239 to 13,642 between 2006 and 2007; and rose again from 13,642 to 22,202 between 2007 and 2008. The net interprovincial migration number in 2008 was just 1% above the 2004 level. (See Figure 9) Over half of these migrants came from Ontario and British Columbia.

The number of international migrants who landed in Alberta rose for six consecutive years. In 2008, there were 3,338 more immigrants who landed in Alberta than the year before. In response to Alberta's tight labour market, the number of temporary foreign workers who came to work in Alberta increased by just over 7,000 in 2007 and 9,000 in 2008. (See Figure 10)

Figure 9
Alberta Interprovincial Migration, 2004-2008
Source: Statistics Canada

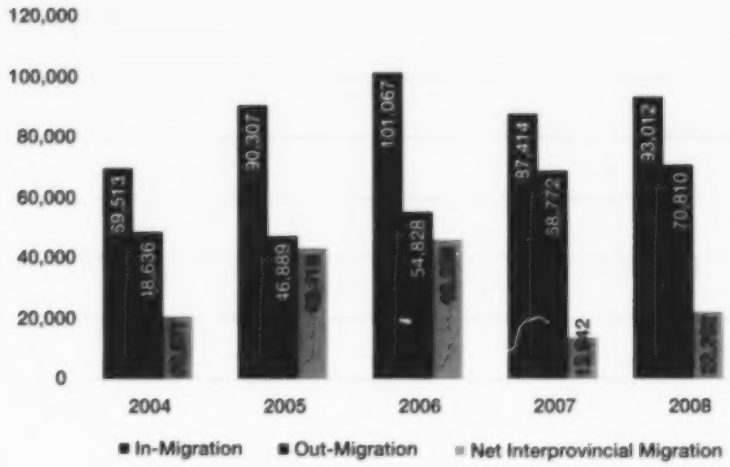
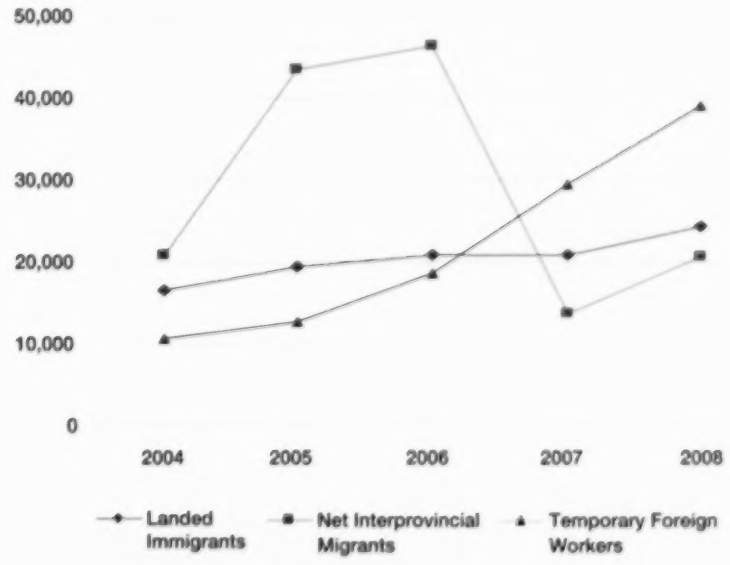


Figure 10
Alberta Landed Immigrants, Net Interprovincial Migrants, and Temporary Foreign Workers*, 2004-2008
Source: Statistics Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada



[2] The 2009 annual statistics were not available when this publication went to press.

** The total number of temporary foreign workers is the sum of initial entries to Alberta during the year.*

Aboriginal People

Employment for Alberta's Aboriginal people decreased

Employment of Aboriginal people living off-reserve in Alberta declined by 7.7% in 2009, or by 5000.

More than 57% of Alberta's Aboriginal people were employed in the Edmonton and Calgary economic regions. (See Figure 11) Almost half the employment loss in 2009 for Aboriginal people, or 2,300, occurred in Calgary.

Employment among Aboriginal people decreased in all but three regions. In the Athabasca-Grande Prairie-Peace River and in Wood Buffalo-Cold Lake regions where 26.9% of Aboriginal people were employed, an employment gain of 400 was recorded in 2009. Employment also increased in Red Deer.

The employment rate for Aboriginal people in 2009 went down 6.5 percentage points to 59.1%. (See Figure 12) This employment rate was the lowest recorded since 2003.

The pattern of industrial employment shifted for Alberta's Aboriginal people in 2009. Between 2008 and 2009, the proportion of Aboriginal people employed in Construction; Manufacturing; and Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction industries declined from 30.8% to 25.9%. The proportion of Aboriginal people employed in Health Care and Social Assistance, Public Administration, Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services industries rose from 28.1% to 36.8%.

In 2009, 52.5% of Aboriginal males were employed in Construction; Trade; Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction; and Transportation and Warehousing industries. For Aboriginal women, 53.8% were employed in Health and Social Services, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Educational Services industries.

Figure 11

Alberta Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, Employment by Economic Region, 2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

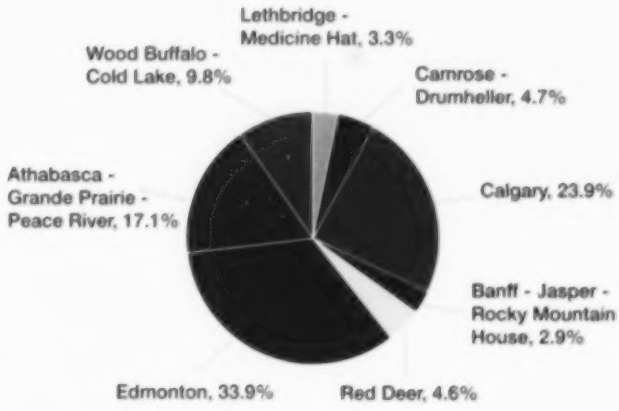
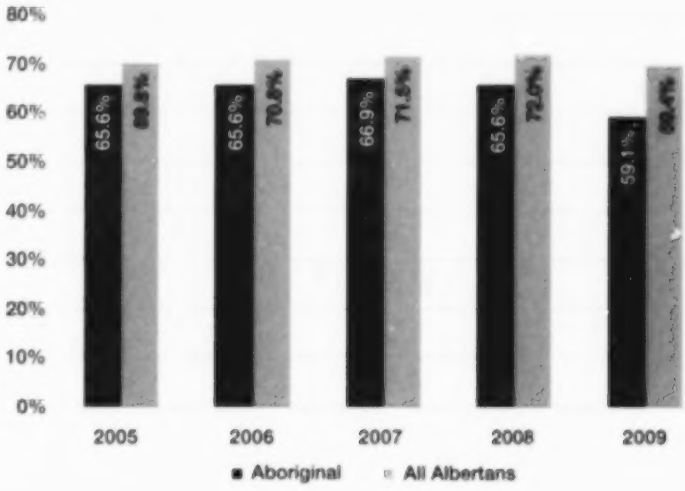

Lethbridge - Medicine Hat, 3.3%
Wood Buffalo - Cold Lake, 9.8%
Camrose - Drumheller, 4.7%
Athabasca - Grande Prairie - Peace River, 17.1%
Calgary, 23.9%
Banff - Jasper - Rocky Mountain House, 2.9%
Edmonton, 33.9%
Red Deer, 4.6%

Figure 12

Alberta Aboriginal People Living Off-Reserve, Employment Rates, 2005-2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



Industries

Employment rose in the Services-Producing Industries

In 2009, the number of people employed in Services-Producing Industries increased by 22,000, while employment in Goods-Producing Industries dropped by 47,200.

Nine industries recorded employment gains. Employment increases in excess of 5,000 occurred in five industries: Accommodation and Food Services, up 12,200; Other Services[3], up 8,900; Information, Culture and Recreation, up 8,400; Health Care and Social Assistance, up 7,600; Public Administration, up 5,900; and Educational Services, up 5,300. (See Figure 13) Employment in these six industries together represented 36.5% of Alberta employment.

The three industries that experienced the largest declines in employment were Manufacturing; Construction; and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services. Employment in these three industries fell 47,000, which represented the majority of the employment loss in Alberta. (See Figure 13)

The following industries have had unemployment rates below 3%, which is indicative of a skill shortage, for the past five years. In 2009, unemployment rates were 1.6% for Health Care and Social Assistance; 1.8% for Public Administration; and 2.2% for Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing.

The four industries with the highest unemployment rates in 2009 were Construction, 9.1%; Manufacturing, 8.2%; Business, Building and Other Support Services, 7.8%; and Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction, at 7.5%.

Figure 13

Alberta Labour Force Statistics by Industry, 2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Industry Group	2009 Employment	Change from 2008	Unemployment Rate
Retail Trade	225,800	-3,900	6.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	197,800	7,600	1.6%
Construction	191,800	-13,500	9.1%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	151,700	-12,500	4.9%
Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction	136,300	-9,200	7.5%
Educational Services	132,100	5,300	3.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	126,100	12,200	6.4%
Manufacturing	123,100	-21,000	8.2%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing	109,700	-3,700	2.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	103,300	1,100	5.9%
Other Services	100,100	8,900	4.9%
Public Administration	89,300	5,900	1.8%
Information, Culture and Recreation	80,000	8,400	5.1%
Wholesale Trade	75,700	-11,600	5.0%
Business, Building and Other Support Services	66,600	2,700	7.8%
Agriculture	55,300	-5,700	*
Utilities	20,400	2,900	*
Forestry and Logging with Support Activities	2,800	-800	*

**Insufficient Data*

[3]Other Services include Repair and Maintenance; Personal and Laundry Services; Religious, Grant-Making, Civic, and Professional and similar organizations; and Private Households.

Occupations

Sales and service occupations had the biggest increase in employment

Employment in four occupational groups rose. The largest occupational group, Sales and service, added 14,100 in employment. The Natural and applied sciences and related occupations had an increase of 10,000 in employment. The two other occupational groups recording employment gains were Social sciences, education, government and religion, up 5,600; and Health occupations, up 5,500. (See Figure 14)

Employment in Business, finance and administrative occupations fell by 20,600, the largest decline among the 10 occupational groups. Employment in Trades, transportation and equipment operator and related occupations declined by 18,500.

Two occupational groups continued to have, for the past five years, unemployment rates below 3%. Social sciences, education, government and religion had an unemployment rate of 2.3%. Management occupations registered an unemployment rate of 2.7%. Trades, transportation and equipment operator and related occupations had the highest unemployment rates at 8.6%. (See Figure 14)

Figure 14

Alberta Labour Force Statistics by Occupation, 2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Occupations	2009 Employment	Change from 2008	Unemployment Rate
Sales and service	470,500	14,100	6.3%
Trades, transportation and equipment operator and related	361,100	-18,500	8.6%
Business, finance and administrative	352,100	-20,600	4.1%
Natural and applied sciences and related	163,600	10,000	4.3%
Management	159,400	-6,000	2.7%
Social sciences, education, government and religion	155,100	5,600	2.3%
Unique to primary industry	109,800	-11,700	6.8%
Health	108,800	5,500	*
Unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	62,800	-2,800	7.4%
Art, culture, recreation and sport	44,700	-1,100	3.9%

Insufficient Data

Education

Over half of Alberta's labour force holds a post-secondary qualification or higher

Alberta's labour force is attaining higher levels of education. In 2004, 50.9% of Alberta's labour force had attained a post-secondary qualifications or higher. In 2009, this proportion rose to 56.3%. There was a steady rise in the proportion of the labour force holding university bachelor degrees: increasing from 14.9% of the labour force in 2005 to 16.2% in 2009. (See Figure 15)

The segment of the labour force with some secondary education has decreased. In 2005, 12.3% of the labour force had some secondary education. This proportion dropped to 11.4% in 2009. The comparable proportion for Canada was 10.2% in 2009.

In addition, the segment of the labour force without any secondary schooling became smaller. In 2005, 2.0% of Alberta labour force had zero to eight years of schooling, compared to 1.6% in 2009. The Canadian proportion in 2009 was 2.5%.

In 2009, 22.6% of the Alberta labour force had a high school diploma, which is higher than the Canadian proportion of 20.2%.

Figure 15

Alberta Labour Force Educational Attainment Trends, 2005-2009

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Educational Level	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
0 to 8 years	2.0%	1.8%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%
Some Secondary	12.3%	13.2%	12.2%	12.4%	11.4%
High School Diploma	23.2%	23.6%	22.7%	22.9%	22.6%
Some Post-Secondary	9.1%	8.4%	9.5%	8.5%	8.1%
Post-Secondary Certificate or Diploma	33.0%	32.1%	33.6%	33.0%	34.5%
University: Bachelor's Degree	14.9%	15.0%	14.6%	15.6%	16.2%
University: Graduate Degree	5.4%	5.8%	5.7%	6.1%	5.7%

Age Groups

Employment fell for younger Albertans, but rose for older Albertans

In terms of employment, the 2009 economic slowdown had a major impact on youth. The number of employed Albertans between 15 and 24 years of age declined 7.7% to 316,400. Within this age group, employment fell 12.5% for those 15 to 19 years of age. (See Figure 16)

Employment for Albertans 25 to 44 years of age decreased 0.5%. For older workers, employment declined by 4% for those between 50 and 54 years of age, but rose 4.3% for those between 55 and 69 years of age.

The employment rate for Albertans 25 to 44 years of age remained high, at 82.6%. (See Figure 17) The employment rate for Albertans between 15 and 24 years of age fell to 62.4% from the 20-year high of 68.0% recorded in 2008. The employment rate for young Canadians was 55.3% in 2009.

78.4% of Albertans between 45 and 64 years of age were employed, the highest rate among employees of the same age group in the ten provinces in 2009. The Canadian employment rate for this age group was 70.3%.

In 2009, 14,900 Albertans retired, 600 fewer than in 2008.

Figure 16
Alberta Employment by Age Groups, 2008-2009
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

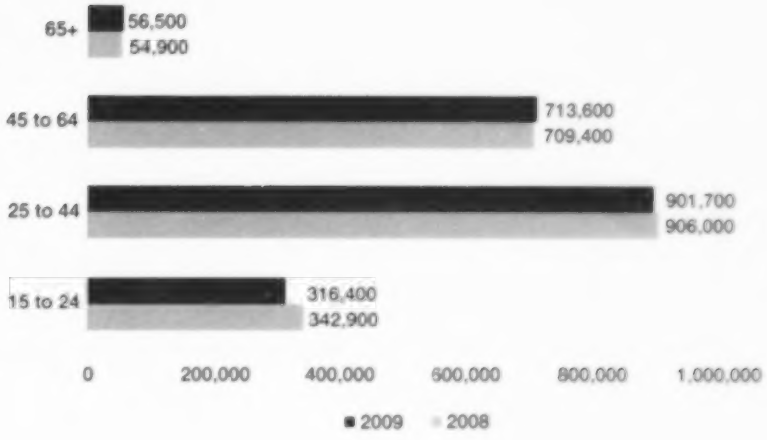
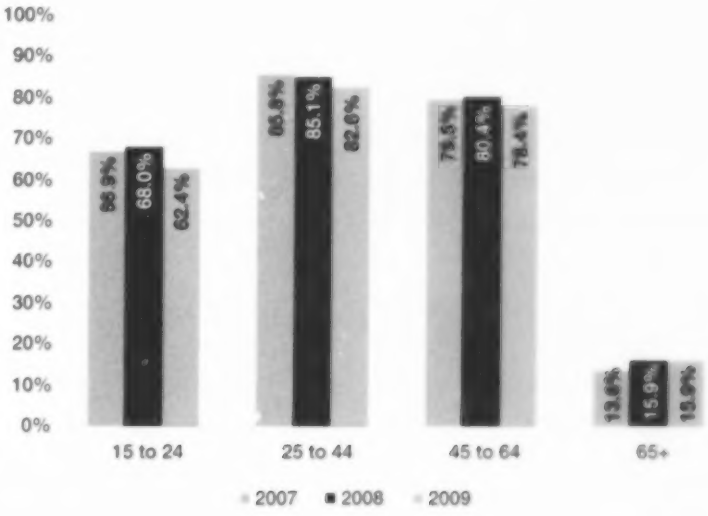


Figure 17
Alberta Employment Rates by Age Groups, 2007-2009
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



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